

REMARKS

Reconsideration and reversal of the rejections expressed in the Office Action of January 13, 2006 are respectfully contended in view of the following remarks and the application as amended. The present invention relates to a non-sensitizing epoxy composition, comprising an uncured epoxy resin composition including a non-sensitizing liquid epoxy resin and a non-sensitizing mercaptan composition capable of curing said epoxy resin when combined with said mercaptan composition to form a substantially uniform mixture, wherein said epoxy resin has a molecular weight greater than about 800-1000, and said epoxy composition is non-sensitizing.

Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 14, 15 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Jorissen et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,548,026. Jorissen et al. relates to a two-part, induction heat curable epoxy adhesive comprising a first part of a polyfunctional epoxy, such as a sorbitol polyglycidyl ether, and a diepoxy compound such as a diepoxy bisphenol-A, wherein a portion of the diepoxy compound may preferably comprise a glycol-based epoxy having an epoxy equivalent weight of at least about 250. The second part of the adhesive is a curing agent, which preferably may be a mixture of -di(aminoalkyl)ether of diethylene glycol products, and a toughening agent. Note that the claims as now amended overcome this rejection. Specifically, the Jorissen et al. reference neither discloses nor suggests an epoxy composition including a sorbitol based epoxy resin having a molecular weight (about 800-1000) as currently claimed, while still being liquid, as well as not being a contact sensitizer, i.e., the epoxy resin and the composition containing it would not have the potential to cause skin irritation. Such enhanced aspects of the present invention as currently claimed are found at e.g., paragraphs 15 and 23 of the present specification. Furthermore, the epoxy compositions as disclosed in Jorissen et al. are induction heat curable, in contrast to the ambient temperature curable epoxy compositions of the present invention. In order to enhance the prosecution of the present application, the claims have been further clarified, as noted above. Thus, this rejection is overcome.

Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 14, 15 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese Patent No. 1-249828 (Japanese '828) in view of Jorissen et al.. Japanese '828 neither discloses nor suggests an epoxy resin admixed with fillers and colorants selected from the group consisting of talc, titanium dioxide, carbon black and mixtures thereof. Note that the claims as amended also overcome this rejection.

Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 14, 15 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese Patent No. 2-108533, Miyamoto Publication No. 2004/0006944, Japanese Patent No. 61-138232, U.S. Patent No. 6,770,957 and Japanese Patent No. 61-185526, in view of Jorissen et al. As pointed out above, the Jorissen et al. reference neither discloses nor suggests an epoxy composition including a sorbitol based epoxy resin having a molecular weight (about 800-1000) as currently claimed, while still being liquid, as well as not being a contact sensitizer. Note that it was acknowledged in the Office Action of September 30, 2005 that the claimed epoxy resin having a molecular weight of greater than about 700 is not recited in the other references cited in this paragraph. As such, Applicants respectfully contend that there is no teaching or suggestion to combine Jorissen et al. with these other references. Thus, this rejection is overcome.

Claims 7 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Jorissen et al. as applied to the claims hereinabove, and further in view of Japanese '533 and Miyamoto. This rejection is overcome based on the previous discussion.

For all of the above reasons, it is respectfully contended that the solicited claims define patentable subject matter. Reconsideration and reversal of the rejections expressed in the Office Action of January 13, 2006 are respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned if any questions arise during the course of reconsideration of this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

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